GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
CULTURE
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3999
ANSWERED ON:27.03.2017
Returning of Artefacts
Maganti Shri Murali Mohan

Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government of Andhra Pradesh has requested the Union Government to bring back/return of the Amaravati Buddhist Sculptures/artefacts kept in the Museum at London and Chennai; and

(b) the initiatives taken by the Union Government with British Government in the matter?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE, CULTURE AND TOURISM (INDEPENDENT CHARGE)

(DR. MAHESH SHARMA)

(a) & (b) The Archaeological Survey of India has not received any request from Government of Andhra Pradesh to bring back/return of the Amaravati Buddhist Sculptures/artefacts kept in the Museum at London and Chennai.

However, the Chairman, Amaravathi Development Authority, Brindavangardens, Guntur, Andhra Pradesh made a request to the Hon'ble Prime Minister of India on 23-4-2015 in this regard. The matter was examined and it was found that the objects in reference were taken away prior to Independence and does not fall under the purview of illegal trafficking and is not violation of the Antiquities and Art Treasures Act, 1972. Hence retrieval of these objects is beyond the purview of the Archaeological Survey of India.

The sculptures displayed in Egmore Museum, Chennai are under the administrative control of Archaeological Department of Tamil Nadu. Hence, the subject is beyond the purview of Archaeological Survey of India.